Songs

Mission Inn. Riverside. Cal. Jan. 17-1924

Mr. Chas. F. Lummis
Los Angeles. Cal.

Dear Sir and Friend: Just a few words of congratulation on your collection of the old Spanish California songs. I have read them over with much delight. I think your English version is most felicitous and very superior to the ordinary rendering of Spanish songs. As I read some of them I thought of a few lines in my poem on "The Heart of the Arriero":

"How merrily sound the songs of the South,
As carelessly flung from the muleteer's mouth:
Songs of the soil, of the heart, of the arm,
Of dulce amor, or partida mon,
With many a sighing and ay de mi,
In the high-pitched, Mexican nasal key".

How many times I have heard the arrieros in the early morning winding among the steep mountain trails in Mexico, singing their old heart songs, careless, happy and child like. You have often heard the

same thing.

But most Americans know nothing of the likeable side of the Spanish Americans, nothing of their hospitality and inborn courtesy. It is only fellows like you and I, who have traveled with them, ate and slept with them in their poor little huts who can appreciate their really good qualities.

As I have often told people: "When you go down into Mexico just carry the Golden Rule along where you can easily lay hands on it, and you will have no trouble, but rather a most delightful time. Especially if you know a little Spanish, and a little history of the country."

I hope you may be able to salvage many of the old songs that you mention. More strongly to your elbow.

Very cordially yours

H. D. Burton

Feb. 25, 1924.

Rev. Francis S. Borton,
Mission Inn, Riverside, Cal.

Dear Borton:

Thank you for your very kind letter about the Spanish Songs, which I should have answered before but for my overwork. They are going like hot cakes-- over 2500 already-- and winning golden opinions from Folklorists, historians and musicians and Mere Human Beings. I am sure these Songs will recall many pleasant memories to you. I wish you could have been at Pasadena with me last Tuesday night at Farwell's Community Sing. You are quite right as to the ignorance of our people about the loveableness of the Spanish-speaking people; but it would have warmed your heart to have heard 800 Gringos just "eating up" these Spanish Songs. They sing them with more gusto and joy than they did Suwanee River, Old Black Joe and our other standbys. I have been hoping to get over to Riverside. But it is very hard for me to go anywhere. Probably it will happen some of these days.

With best wishes,

Always Sincerely Yours,